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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes information gathered by Project FORUM at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education from data collected by state education agencies (SEAs) on the provision of related services to students with disabilities. A survey asked SEAs to report on whether they collected state-level data on 13 types of related services. Forty-three states and four jurisdictions completed the survey. Findings indicate that despite the fact that SEAs are not required by law to collect and report on data pertaining to related services, at least 33 SEAs collect some information on this subject. Eight of the SEAs collected data on all 13 related services identified. Most commonly, data are collected on speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. In addition, 23 of these SEAs collect their related services data by disability, age group, gender, and race/ethnicity. One state noted that it collects only a limited amount of data on related services because the Office of Special Education Programs does not mandate data collection. The report concludes that it is significant that so many states and non-state jurisdictions believe it is important to collect data on this aspect of service delivery to students with disabilities. (CR)

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Related Services Data Collection by States: Quick Turn Around (QTA)

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Quick Turn Around

Project FORUM

QTA – A brief analysis of a critical issue in special education

Related Services Data Collected by States

October 2002

Eve Müller & Jennifer Tschantz

Purpose

This Quick Turn Around report summarizes information gathered by Project FORUM at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) on data collected by state education agencies (SEAs) on the provision of related services to students with disabilities. This activity was carried out as part of Project FORUM's Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

Background and Federal Legislation

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), all children with disabilities must "...have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living" [20 U.S.C. §1400(c)(1)(A)]. SEAs are required to ensure that related services are made available, yet little is known about the number of children with disabilities that receive related services and the type and amount of services received. The related services community is particularly interested in learning more about this topic.

Current data requirements mandate state-wide collection of child count data, information on disability categories, information on educational environments, exiting data, and information on personnel.[1] Furthermore, through the Biennial Performance Report (BPR), states are required to provide data on suspensions and expulsions, disproportionality and participation in assessments. Some

[1] Data collection requirements referenced in this paragraph can be found in the following sections of IDEA: 20 U.S.C. §1418(a)(1)(A); §1412(a)(16); Part D, §653(b)(2)(B); §1412(a)(22); §1418(c)(1); and §1412(a)(17)(B).

information on related services is collected for Part C (under the rubric of early intervention services) as part of the mandated state data collection, but nothing comparable is required under Part B.

Several of the federally funded national studies address questions pertaining to related services, including the Pre-elementary Educational Longitudinal Study (PEELS), the National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS), the Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study (SEELS) and the Study of State and Local Implementation and Impact of IDEA (SLIIDEA).[2] For instance, the SEELS survey asks which types of related services are provided to individual children during the current school year and the SLIIDEA survey asks how many related services staff hold positions in particular schools. However, these studies will only provide nationally representative data and not state level data. The survey results reported in this document represent an initial analysis of state-level data on this topic.

Survey

In collaboration with the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and the American Speech Language and Hearing Association (ASHA), Project FORUM developed a survey that was sent to all SEAs in May, 2002.

The survey requested SEAs to report on whether they collect state-level data on the following thirteen types of related services: (1) adaptive/special physical education; (2) assistive technology; (3) audiology; (4) counseling/rehabilitative counseling; (5) orientation and mobility services; (6) occupational therapy; (7) physical therapy; (8) psychological services; (9) recreation/therapeutic recreation; (10) school health; (11) social work; (12) speech/language therapy; and (13) vision services. SEAs were also asked to report on any other related services for which they collect data. For each type of related service, SEAs were asked if they collect state-wide data (a) on the number of children receiving that service; (b) on the amount of service as noted on IEPs; and (c) by disability category, age or age group, gender and race/ethnicity. SEAs were further asked whether or not:

- data are collected on vacancies for specific related services positions;
- related services data are available via written report or electronic format;
- related services data are available at the local education agency (LEA) level; and
- any one-time study has been conducted on the topic of related services within the last 10 years.

[2] Website for PEELS is at www.sri.com/policy/cehs/dispolicy/peels.html, for NEILS is at www.sri.com/neils/, for SEELS is at www.seels.net/, and for SLIIDEA is at www.abt.sliidea.org.

Forty-three states and four non-state jurisdictions completed the survey for a total of 47 responses. The remainder of this document contains data from the surveys.

Findings

Number of Children Receiving Related Services

Fourteen responding SEAs do not collect any data on the number of children receiving related services.[3] Of the remaining 33 responding SEAs, eight collect data on all 13 related services included in this study, 10 collect data on all but one or two related services, eight collect data on between six and ten, and seven collect data on between one and five related services.

All 33 SEAs collect data on speech language therapy, and 30 SEAs collect data on occupational therapy and physical therapy (See Table 1). Fewer SEAs (between 20-26 SEAs each) collect data on audiology, counseling/rehabilitation counseling, psychological services, recreation/therapeutic recreation, school health and social work. Data on adaptive/special physical education, assistive technology, orientation and mobility services, and vision services are collected by the fewest responding SEAs (under 20 SEAs each).

Table 1
SEAs Collecting Data on Number of Children Receiving Related Services (N=47*)

	Types of Related Services												
	Adapt P.E.	Assist Tech	Audio	Counsel/ Rehab Counsel	Orient & Mobil	OT	PT	Psych Services	Rec Therapy	School Health	Soc Work	Speech Lang Therapy	Vision Services
Number of SEAs	19	16	26	24	19	30	30	25	20	20	25	33	19

*A total of 33 SEAs reported collecting some data on the number of children receiving related services.

[3] Of the fourteen SEAs who reported that related services data are *not* collected at the state level, two noted that these data are collected at the LEA level.

Fourteen SEAs reported collecting data on additional related services not listed on the survey. Five to seven SEAs gathered data on the following related services: interpretation services; medical diagnostic/evaluation services; parent counseling and training; transportation services and vocational services. Three or fewer SEAs collected data on attendant care; art therapy; dance/movement therapy; extended school year; group counseling; home and hospital instruction; intensive behavior intervention; intervener services for students with deafblindness; mobility assistance; special music education; music therapy; transition services; travel training; work coordination and work study.

Amount of Related Service on Children's IEPs

Of the 33 SEAs that reported collecting data on the number of children receiving related services, 13 also collect data on the amount of each type of service noted on children's IEPs – although not necessarily for all 13 related services listed on this survey (See Table 2). In addition to the 13, one SEA collects IEP data for the five most common related services as well as collecting total amounts of direct and indirect (e.g., consultative) services aggregated across all types of related service.

Table 2
SEAs Collecting Data on Amount of Related Services on IEP (N=47*)

	Types of Related Services												
	Adapt P.E.	Assist Tech	Audio	Counsel/ Rehab Counsel	Orient & Mobil	OT	PT	Psych Services	Rec Therapy	School Health	Soc Work	Speech Lang Therapy	Vision Services
Number of SEAs	7	4	9	10	6	12	12	9	8	7	9	13	5

* A total of 13 SEAs reported collecting some data on the amount of related services on children's IEPs.

Data Collection by Disability, Age, Gender and Ethnicity

Thirty-two SEAs collect data on the provision of related services by at least one of the following categories: disability; age or age group; gender; and race/ethnicity (See Table 3). Twenty-three SEAs gather some related services data by all four categories and the remaining SEAs collect data by three categories or fewer. One state noted that it does not collect data by disability because it uses non-categorical designations. Another state noted that, while it does not collect data by age category, it does collect data by building type (e.g., K-12, junior high, high school). Four of the 32 states noted that information is linked to student identification numbers and is accessible via statewide computerized data retrieval systems.

Table 3
SEAs Collecting Data by Disability, Age, Gender and Ethnicity (N=47*)

	Types of Related Services												
Number of SEAs	Adapt P.E.	Assist Tech	Audio	Counsel/ Rehab Counsel	Orient & Mobil	OT	PT	Psych Services	Rec Therapy	School Health	Soc Work	Speech Lang Therapy	Vision Services
Disability	15	15	22	22	16	26	26	21	18	17	21	28	16
Age	15	15	21	20	17	24	24	20	17	16	21	27	15
Gender	14	14	20	18	17	22	22	19	16	15	19	24	15
Ethnicity	14	14	20	18	17	22	22	19	16	15	19	24	15

*A total of 32 SEAs reported collecting some related services data by at least one of the listed categories.

Related Services Vacancies

Twenty-eight of the responding SEAs regularly collect data on at least one of the following six professional and para-professional vacancies: occupational therapist; physical therapist; speech-language pathologist; occupational therapist assistant; physical therapist assistant and speech-language pathologist assistant (See Table 4). [4] Most frequently, SEAs collect information on vacancies for all three professional positions (total of 13 SEAs) – i.e., speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist and physical therapist. Four

[4] Data on vacancies were missing for two respondents.

states collect information on vacancies for all six positions and eleven other SEAs collect vacancy data for between one and five of the positions. Seventeen SEAs do not provide information on vacancies for any of the positions.

Table 4
SEAs Collecting Personnel Vacancy Data (N=47*)

	Type of Personnel Vacancy Data					
	Occupational Therapist	Speech-Language Pathologist	Physical Therapist	Occupational Therapy Assistant	Speech-Language Pathologist Assistant	Physical Therapy Assistant
Number of SEAs	23	27	24	8	4	9

*A total of 28 SEAs reported collecting some related services personnel vacancy data.

Public Availability of Data

Just over half of responding SEAs (25) reported that data they collect on related services are available in either written or electronic format.[5] Eleven SEAs make this information available via written reports, eight via electronic formats and four use both written and electronic formats. In addition, one SEA noted that the report is only available as an internal document and another noted that a report is forthcoming. Although 21 SEAs reported that they do not make data on related services available in either written or electronic format, seven of these noted that they are able to generate reports on an ad hoc basis or by request.

State-wide Studies

Eleven SEAs reported that a one-time study has been conducted within the state on the topic of related services in the past ten years. These studies were conducted by a variety of entities (e.g., institutes of higher education, government offices, developmental disability councils and state and federal policy institutes) and for a wide range of purposes (e.g., the Special Education Expenditure Project, reports on training and personnel needs, cost-benefit analyses and a study on children with disabilities).

[5] Data on reporting were missing for one respondent.

Concluding Remarks

In spite of the fact that SEAs are not required by law to collect and report on data pertaining to related services, at least 33 SEAs collect some information on this subject. Most commonly, data are collected on speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy. Additionally, 23 of these SEAs collect their related services data by disability, age group, gender and race/ethnicity. One state noted that it collects only a very limited amount of data on related services because data collection is not mandated by OSEP. Although it is not within the scope of this document to identify how related services data are used by SEAs, it is nonetheless significant that so many states and non-state jurisdictions believe it is important to collect data on this aspect of service delivery to students with disabilities. In the near future the federally-funded national studies will address some questions pertaining to related services. Should more detailed information be desired regarding related services, findings from Project FORUM's survey indicate that many SEAs are a potential data source.

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